

Message Text

SECRET

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EXDIS

FOLLOWING RECD FROM SONGKHLA 20 MAR REPEATED FOR YOUR
INFO:

QUOTE

S E C R E T/NOFORN SONGKHLA 035

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT PGOV TH

SUB: GENERAL SAN ON THAILAND'S FUTURE

EXDIS

DURING MEETING WITH FOREIGN SERVICE INSPECTORS MARCH 18 MAJ. GEN.
SAN CHITBATIMA GAVE FOLLOWING OPINIONS:

1. FUTURE REVOLUTION SHOULD BE A MILITARY
ONE, WITH ARMY TAKING CONTROL AND PRESERVING NATION. ARMY COULD
LIVE WITH KHUKRIT GOVERNMENT FOR TIME BEING SINCE HE WAS CONSERVATIVE
AND CABINET INCLUDED CONSERVATIVE FORCES. REAL TEST WOULD COME
WHEN BUDGET IS VOTED IN JULY SAN CLAIMED. RTA HAS NO "YOUNG
TURK" PHENOMENON AMONG JUNIOR OFFICERS AND MILITARY IS AS ONE,
RIGHTIST AND PATRIOTIC.

2. DEMONSTRATIONS. SAN SAID HE ALREADY ORGANIZED COUNTER-DEMOS
AGAINST ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT DEMONSTRATORS IN PHATTHALUNG AND
NAKHOM SI THAMMARAT AND WILL CONTINUE PRACTICE IN FUTURE AS
ONLY METHOD OF COMBATING WELL-ORGANIZED DISRUPTORS. HE CLAIMED
HE SUGGESTED IDEA TO LT. GEN. WITHUN YASAWAT LAST YEAR AND THAT
WITHUN'S USE OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS IN COUNTER-DEMO AGAINST STUDENTS

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DEMONSTRATIONS FOR LOWER CONSTITUTIONAL AGE REQUIREMENTS STEMMED

FROM THIS. SAN EXPECTED "ESTABLISHMENT" TO USE THIS TACTIC
THROUGHOUT COUNTRY NOW.

3. MUSLIM MP'S. SAN SAID TWO MUSLIM MP'S HAD SEPARATIST
CONNECTIONS. HE ALSO CLAIMED CREDIT FOR ELECTING THREE THAI
BUDDHIST IN MUSLIM PROVINCES, ADDING THAT WITHOUT HIS EFFORTS
MUSLIMS WOULD HAVE WON ALL SIX SEATS. (COMMENT: THIS SEEMS CONFIRM
STORY WE ARE GETTING THAT SOME BALLOTS STUFFED IN DEEP SOUTH.
TWO MUSLIMS CONSIDERED SHOO-INS STRANGELY NOT ELECTED AND
CURRENTLY SUEING FOR RECOUNT. ONE IS SON OF HAJI SULONG, MUSLIM
REBEL LEADER OF 1950'S. SEE SONGKHLA A-2.).

4. STUDENTS. SAN CLAIMED STUDENTS GETTING OUT OF HAND AND
ADMINISTRATORS WEAK. HE SAID SYSTEM OF ELECTED UNIVERSITY RECTORS
WAS WRONG AND THAT RTG SHOULD APPOINT RECTORS INSTEAD, THEREBY
INSURING STRONG COMMAND AT TOP OF FACULTIES. SAN SAID HE NOW SENDING
NEWLY-GRADUATED CADETS BACK TO VILLAGES FOR INTEL AND ANTI-
DEMONSTRATOR PURPOSES. HE ALSO HAS IDEA TO RECRUIT STUDENT INFORMERS
WHO NOW TAKE THREE YEAR ROTC COURSE AT UNIVERSITY IN ORDER TO
EVADE THE DRAFT. SAN BRAGGED THAT THOSE WHO REFUSE
TO BECOME INFORMERS WOULD HAVE THEIR ROTC CREDIT HELD UP
AND THUS THREATENED WITH THE DRAFT. HE THOUGHT
THIS MIGHT BE GOOD CLUB IN SUCH RECRUITING.

5. US RELATIONS. IN ELIPTICAL TERMS SAN IMPLIED HE UNDERSTOOD
PROBLEMS USG WAS NOW HAVING IN AID SITUATION. HE SEEMED CONFIDENT
THAIS COULD MAINTAIN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY IN SPITE OF CAMBODIAN
FALL, AND THAT ARMY COULD ALSO HACK IT ONCE USG BASES REMOVED.
HE ADDED JOKINGLY THAT WE COULD HELP BY LEAVING THE TROOP'S
WEAPONS BEHIND AS THEY LEFT AS SOME SORT OF MAP PROGRAM.

COMMENT: ALTHOUGH SIMILAR COMMENTS APPEAR IN SERIES OF PREVIOUS
MEMCONS, I NOTED THAT AS INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SITUATION GROWS
INCREASINGLY WORRISOME, SAN'S VIEWS TURN CORRESPONDINGLY RIGID.
BELIEVE THIS IS GOOD WEATHERVANE OF CURRENT RTA THINKING, SINCE HE
VERY CLOSE TO TOP LEADERSHIP.

CASTRODALE
UNQUOTE MASTERS

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